



Kentucky Literacy Link

A Publication of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)

Special points of interest:

- Spotlight on 21st-century learning in Barren County
- Support the Kentucky Public Libraries' summer reading programs
- Ideas to revitalize your traditional summer reading list

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Looking Back and Pressing Forward

As another school year draws to a close, I hope we find time to reflect on all we have accomplished. This year was fruitful and full. You faced and embraced many professional challenges and set a baseline from which we will grow. We pioneered accountability for the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) with our new Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP) tests. We hit the ground running with writing, arts & humanities and practical living/career studies Program Reviews to assess our adherence to Senate Bill 1. We undertook the huge endeavor of engaging our students in college and career planning with Operation Preparation. Through large initiatives and individual efforts, we made active strides toward our ultimate goal of achieving college and career readiness for Kentucky students.

We have set the standard for the rest of the nation, and the nation is watching and learning. We should take a moment to celebrate our successes, assess our areas for improvement and (as we do when we formatively assess) plan our next steps carefully. We will stay the course in the many areas of promise and make adjustments where necessary to

incorporate what we've learned from this busy year. This summer, please find the time to rest, renew and reward yourself for a job well done.

In this issue, we pay special attention to the "summer slump" and make suggestions for keeping learners engaged over the break. Considering our continuing battle with the achievement gap, summer reading loss is a serious foe. Studies show that, on average, the reading proficiency levels of students from lower income families decline over the summer months, while the reading proficiency levels of students from middle-income families improve modestly. In a single academic year, this decline could result in as much as a three-month achievement gap between more advantaged and less advantaged students. Between grades 1 and 6, the potential cumulative impact of this achievement gap could compound to 1.5 to 3 years' worth of reading development lost in the summer months alone (Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay, & Greathouse, 1996; Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 1997).

"The value placed on literacy in

the home, time spent reading with children, and the availability and use of reading materials have been identified as important elements in children's reading success" (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). We must support reading over the summer by making materials engaging and accessible. It is not enough to tell parents and students that it is important to read. Parents need to be offered concrete, specific programs and suggestions on how to participate in family literacy, and they need to be supported in their attempts to do so (Edwards, 2004). This issue includes a variety of such concrete examples from KDE, public libraries and your colleagues across the state.

While you're encouraging your students to read, be sure and take time to enjoy a few good books yourself. Join me in making a pledge to read at "Find a Book, Kentucky" (see article page 2) and encourage your students to do the same. Congratulations on a great year and enjoy your summer!

MK Hardaway is a KDE literacy consultant and the editor of this publication. Contact her at kay.hardaway@education.ky.gov.

KDE Updates

Twitter Town Hall

Please note that Commissioner Holliday's Twitter Town Hall scheduled for May 23 has been rescheduled for June 20th from 4-5 p.m. ET.

Literacy Planning Webinars

In March and April we hosted a set of webinars to support district and school literacy planning and to introduce the release of the Literacy Central website. They are now archived and avail-

able for viewing [here](#).

On-Demand Rubric Posted

The on-demand writing scoring rubric for this year's K-PREP assessment has been posted. Access it and additional resources [here](#).

Classroom Spotlight: 21st-Century Learning in Barren County

by Renee Boss, KDE academic core branch manager

People ask me if I miss the classroom and I usually answer "yes," but finding opportunities to connect with teachers or to help teachers connect with one another is certainly the next best thing to teaching students. Serving as a facilitator with the English/Language Arts Content Leadership Networks has provided me an opportunity to make the critical connections with teachers such as Letitia Hughes at Barren County High School. At the start of the 2011-12 school year, a friend, Robyn Cnockaert from Strasburg, France, contacted me to see if I could connect her and her students with a teacher in Kentucky so her students could participate in a global exchange with American students. Knowing Letitia's commitment to global exchanges for her students, I immediately contacted her to see if she would be interested. Last month I checked in with Robyn and Letitia to see how the year had evolved.

RB: Tell me about your decision to work collaboratively with students in France and the U.S.

RC: I'm trying to bring such collaborations into the heart of my classes. I think that if learning and/or using a language is about communication, then my students should be in collaboration with native speakers. I also believe that language classes should be about creating moments where "real life" can happen as often as possible. I try to create moments where

"things" exist, if only for minutes, days or weeks. Those 'things' might be blogs, but they might equally be magazines that can be distributed and read or stage productions that the students have written or songs students have composed to be sung in front of an audience.

LH: You approached me about it at a meeting. I am always looking for ways to provide real-world writing opportunities for my students. When I read Robyn's initial e-mail to my classes, they were so excited that we began our digital pen pal program immediately.

RB: How did you decide what the shared project would be? Why this project? How did you arrange the logistics?

LH: We made homemade posters about our school and community and sent them to each other via snail mail. The postage costs and customs paperwork were surprising to me as I had never sent anything that far. The posters from France hang in my room as ours do in their room. We learned that some of the interests of our kids are the same such as music and movies. One funny thing that happened was that a group of kids made a poster about Kentucky Wildcat basketball, and one of the French students asked if those were the same Wildcats as in *High School Musical*. I sent via e-mail the video of

the commercial that our school made for the local cable channel. Her class made a video of their school and sent it via snail mail on a flash drive. They wanted it to be a special gift just for us, rather than posted online to share with the world. I think that is the unique part of all this. Our students have used many virtual tools such as e-mail, Facebook and blogs; however, they also have used "old-fashioned" methods such as making handmade posters and using snail mail. We have had the best of both worlds - instant connection with a click of a mouse and the anticipation of opening an actual package that has travelled so far to reach us.

RC: We began by setting our students up as pen pals and then began looking for ways that we might create points that connect. When Letitia told me in December that she was going to study *The Crucible* in the new year, I got myself organized, so that I could teach it too. As we moved through the acts and scenes, we shared ideas by e-mail before asking our students to post on the blog.

RB: Why do you think it's important for students to connect with other students across the globe?

LH: Our students have read some of the great literary works this year and have

blogged about their reactions. It has been interesting to see those reactions from varied cultural perspectives. That is just one example of what great literature can do - literally connect readers worlds away. The kids have really enjoyed the project and several want to present it at STLP (Student Technology Leadership Program) next year. My students who have taken French have had the extra benefit using their foreign language skills as well — sometimes they write a bit in French. One student, Stephanie, said "I like seeing the cultural difference and how even though there are a lot of differences we still act the same and have a lot in common." Stephanie's pen pal is from Pontonniers. **RC:** When I learned French in high school we read about the La Dupont family who lived near Paris. Learning all about Pierre and Françoise was a practical way to learn vocabulary and how to conjugate verbs, but we all knew that these people didn't really exist. I didn't want to use the Smith family in my classes. I really want my students to connect with other students across the globe be-

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KYREADS

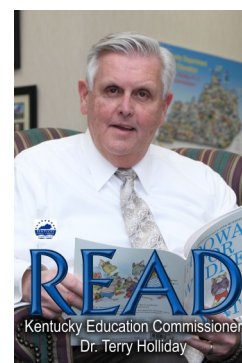
Kentucky First Lady Jane Beshear joins with the Kentucky Department of Education in supporting the Kentucky Public Libraries' Summer Reading Programs. This year's themes are "Dream Big" (early literacy and children) and

"Own the Night" (teens). A letter to parents from Mrs. Beshear will be sent to schools in May encouraging families to support reading throughout the summer months. Watch and share a brief video from Mrs. Beshear at this link: [http://](http://tinyurl.com/summerreadingkyvideo)

tinyurl.com/summerreadingkyvideo.

Teachers and parents are encouraged to help children use "Find a Book, Kentucky" (<http://www.lexile.com/fab/ky>) to build personal reading lists

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Revitalize Your Summer Reading List

As adults, we enjoy choosing the books we read on a daily basis. However, when we send home booklists for the summer it seems much more structured for students. Why? Why don't we give them a little more freedom by providing them with books that may interest them? We also should provide websites that encourage reading, as well as questioning, analyzing, critiquing, comparing, contrasting and synthesizing ideas.

Twenty-first-century learning has taken a huge turn into the land of technology and so have our students. Even though some of our students' homes do not have a computer, many of them have cell phones, which students and adults are using for Facebook, Twitter, e-mail, movies and more. We suggest harnessing this technol-

ogy by giving our students websites that encourage reading on a whole new plane. The websites listed in this article encourage students to not only read, but also to post reviews, write their own stories, dig deeper into a subject area that arouses their individual interests, share their reading with friends on social media outlets like Facebook and Twitter, and even create their own book trailers to post on YouTube. Let the students choose whether they want to have a physical book or another type of reading right in the palms of their hands. If they choose it, they are more likely to read it and share it with others.

Another idea is to use Twitter as a hook for informational reading. On Twitter we follow an account all about random facts, and we've seen how

engaging they can be. This particular account tweets 3-5 shocking, interesting or plain crazy facts a day. If the fact interests you, you can click a link to a short informational article that expounds on the fact. Of course, we don't click on every one, but we can see how this could get a student to read at least one informational text a day (it works on us.) The facts are short like "Eating boogers is actually good for you!" or "A Chinese boy was born with ELEVEN extra fingers and toes!" This certainly would be tempting to a young person. A teacher, team of teachers or school could easily create such an account for their students. Any of the suggested articles linked below would be good resources to draw facts from



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Summer Reading for English Learners

English Learners (ELs) can make amazing strides in English during the school year. Then comes summer ... and ELs are no different than other students. They too need to be encouraged to read all summer long. Listed below are some resources for teachers of English Learners, including some wonderful resources teachers can share with EL students and parents, to encourage summer reading.

Multicultural Book Lists:

Providing English Learners with books that reflect their cultural background makes reading for ELs at all grade levels more compelling. When English Learners read books that have

familiar settings and contexts, they are more interested in what they read, and they can activate their knowledge of their own culture to help them comprehend the text. The Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison provides two lists that are great references for teachers and their EL students and parents. The first list, [50 Multicultural Books Every Child Should Know](#), includes book titles sorted for preschool, ages 5-7, ages 7-9 and ages 9-12. Click on any title listed, and you will be guided to a page that provides a picture of the book, along with publication information, ISBN number and

a summary of the story. The second list, [30 Multicultural Books Every Child Should Know](#), is for teen readers and includes books about and by people from a variety of cultures.

[¡Colorín Colorado!](#) is a bilingual website in English and Spanish that provides a wealth of resources for EL teachers, students and parents. These resources can be downloaded and shared with students and parents to encourage summer reading:

- [Reading Tip Sheets for Parents](#) of ELs from birth through grade 3. These downloadable tip



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Family Literacy: Wonderopolis

Parenting.com, 4/26/12 Best Kids' Apps Pick: Wonderopolis

By Jeana Lee Tahnk
Works on: iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad

Cost: FREE
For: School-age kids and up who want to learn a new fun fact everyday

What makes blue cheese blue?
Who invented the high five?
What happens if you swallow gum?
How much rain can a cloud hold?
What's a googol?

Remember the stage of life when toddlers start every single sentence with "why?" The questions upon questions about anything and everything are when kids are learning about world around them and trying to make sense of everything. If your kids haven't grown out of this stage of life (or you haven't

either) and still have that sense of wonder about the way the world works, the Wonderopolis app is a perfect way to satisfy that need-to-know.

Created by the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), Wonderopolis is a fantastically cool app that teaches curious users a new fun fact every day. As you can see from the small sampling of questions above, all different kinds of topics are covered. The answers are in-depth and educational, and most are accompanied with a related video that helps elucidate the answer even further.

There are more than 560 facts/wonders in Wonderopolis right now, making for hours of education and learning fun all in one app – the facts are also available on the Wonderopolis website. You can browse through all the entries or use the search functionality to find

facts in specific categories like Animals, Biography, Cultures of the World, Earth, Exercise, Food, Geography, Nature, Oceans and many more. And if you find an especially tantalizing fact, you can share the knowledge with your social networks on Twitter or "like" it on Facebook.

This educational and informative app offers a bounty of fun facts that anyone would be better off knowing. After all, knowing that a "googol" is 1 followed by 100 zeroes may come in very handy one day.

This blurb was shared on behalf of NCFL by Bonnie Lash Freeman. Bonnie Lash Freeman is an education specialist - Training/Special Projects for the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL). She can be reached at bfree-man@familit.org.

"Family is the most important thing in the world."

-Princess Diana



Summer Reading for ELs

sheets have been translated into 11 languages: English, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Korean, Navajo, Russian, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

- [Reading Tip Sheets for Educators](#) for students in upper elementary, middle and high school in both English and Spanish
- A series of additional downloadable [Guides for Parents: Family Guide/Guia para la Familia](#) – available in Spanish, English, Somali and Hmong
- [A Compact for Reading and School-Home Links/Guia sobre la lectura con-](#)

[cise y enlaces entre la casa y escuela](#) in English and

- Spanish
- [Helping Your Child Become a Reader/Como ayudar a su hijo a ser un buen lector](#) in English and Spanish
- [Pathways to Success/Camino al Triunfo](#) in English and Spanish

To share information with your colleagues regarding ELs and summer reading loss, go to the ¡Colorín Colorado! website, which provides a series of research reports on the importance of [Extended Learning Time for ELLs](#). Reading these articles reminds all of us that it is vital for English Learners and their families to be included in

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the focus on prevention of summer reading loss. Have a great summer -- and happy reading!

Resources:

www.colorincolorado.org
www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/books/detailListBooks.asp?idBookLists=42
www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/books/detailListBooks.asp?idBookLists=253

-Jayne Kraemer, Ph.D.
Title III Consultant, English Learners & Immigrant Students
jayne.kraemer@education.ky.gov



Building Listening, Speaking and Viewing Skills Across Content Areas

As an intermediate language arts teacher, I recognize the development of listening, speaking and viewing skills as essential components of literacy and therefore, an essential part of any social studies unit I develop. While exploring how to help students develop these skills, I realized they should consider two primary questions: how can I best interact with visual and auditory cues to gain meaning, and what can I do to provide adequate visual and auditory cues to inform an audience?

I explored these skills within a Civil Rights Unit. We started by viewing short clips of video I created. Then we viewed them again with a keener awareness of visual and oral cues. We practiced sharing what our

brains were taking note of and shared these ideas in a variety of settings. We noted our observations using simple stems (e.g. "I saw ..., I heard ..., I thought ... or I understood ...") For example, if a character in the clip was wearing a police uniform, and we heard the sound of a siren, we knew that more than likely the character the officer was approaching had probably broken some sort of law. It sounds simple, but after practicing this deliberate and systematic analysis of the video, students began to realize how much deeper their understanding of the content was. After the application of rubrics to assess their own listening and viewing skills, the process became automatic.

Next we moved to content-

specific video addressing various aspects of the Civil Rights Movement. Students viewed video from History.com, electronic issues of *Scholastic News* and a variety of other clips I bookmarked for them. While listening and viewing, students used the same process previously practiced and then discussed the cues they saw or heard and what meaning they gained from each one. This often led one group member to build off of another until deeper understanding was gained.

The final part of the listening, speaking, viewing unit required students to take what they learned about themselves as listeners and speakers along with the understanding they



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Early Assessment Program (EAP) Professional Development

Please join us for the summer Early Assessment Program in English professional development workshop, "Analyzing Texts from Multiple Perspectives."

When: Saturday, June 23
Where: NKU Student Union 108

Registration is limited to twenty 11th- and 12th-grade language arts teachers. The registration deadline is May 25. Each participating teacher will receive lunch, a packet of classroom and workshop materials, and a stipend for attending.

Workshop Agenda

8:30-9 a.m. Refreshments and welcome from Nancy Kersell,

director of the EAP in English.

9-10:15 a.m. Session I: Annotating the Text. Presenter: Ben Lusk, director of curriculum, Campbell County, will provide strategies for helping students read and analyze poetry and fiction using rhetorical questions.

10:15-10:30 a.m. Break and refreshments

10:30-11:45. Session II: Making it Work: Instructional Strategies at the Core of LDC Module Implementation. Presenter: Gary McCormick, district writing coordinator, Kenton County, will focus on the reading and writing strategies his district's teachers have used to enhance student learning toward com-

mon core standards in several content areas.

11:45-12:30 p.m. Lunch

12:30-1:45 p.m. Session III: Writing Rhetorically: What Does This Mean? Presenter: Jennifer Celio, director of the NKU English Department Writing Instruction Program, will present strategies for analyzing texts from multiple perspectives and developing writing assignments that focus on rhetorical strategies and language.

To register, contact Nancy Kersell at kerselln@nku.edu. Please include your name, school name and student grade level you teach.

**"I like to listen.
I have learned a
great deal from
listening
carefully. Most
people never
listen."**

**- Ernest
Hemingway**

Service Learning Through Writing at Young Writers Camps

With sites in Bardstown, Buckner, Clark Co., Crestwood, LaGrange, Louisville, Morehead, Richmond, Rowan Co., the National Writing Project's Young Writers Camps will have lots of opportunities to write and create—with an emphasis on FUN.

The centerpiece of our week will be writing an informational "e-book" that will be contributed to an online library and read by children all over the

world. We will work through an organization called *Unite for Literacy*, which is committed to improving literacy in areas of the world where books are scarce.

The software we'll use is available for use at home and can be downloaded for free. Your child will then be able to continue writing and submitting e-books all summer.

Young Writers Camps are

offered through the sites of the National Writing Project at various universities around the state and co-sponsored by the Kentucky Writing Project Network and Unite for Literacy.

Master teachers will work with student writers to develop their skills and confidence as writers while also making a difference in the world.

For more information about the National Writing Project,



see www.nwp.org.

Unite for Literacy: <http://uniteforliteracy.com>.

Kentucky Reads

for summer reading and then locate their selections at their school library or local public library. "Find a Book, Kentucky" uses the widely-adopted Lexile® measure to match a reader with books that will provide the right level of challenge to support reading growth. School librarians and public librarians are ready to assist children and their parents as they make summer reading selections.

New this year: The Kentucky Department of Education encourages students to "**Pledge to Read**" during the summer on the "Find a Book, Kentucky" site. Look for the "Submit your summer reading pledge" icon to indicate participation.

Find more information on the Kentucky Department of Education's "Summer Reading" at <http://tinyurl.com/KYSummerReading>.

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Each school's certified school librarian has additional resources to promote Summer Reading Programs. For more information about specific activities, contests and reading events for the Summer Reading Program in your county, contact your local public library (<http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/Pages/LibraryDirectory.aspx>).

Contact Kathy Mansfield via e-mail at kathy.mansfield@education.ky.gov with any questions.

"Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing."

-Benjamin Franklin

Content Area Literacy

gained of their topic and develop presentations for their classmates. Together we developed a rubric that the audience would use to provide feedback regarding the effectiveness of the visual and oral cues. Based on class discussions, I created a presentation guide that included questions such as: What do I want my audience to understand about this topic? What props or other visual cues can I use to help my audience gain that mean-

ing? What supporting details from the video will I use to support the main idea? What will my audience see/hear (actions, props, setting, words ...)? All the while, I roamed the room reminding them to consider their own experience as listeners and viewers when creating the presentation.

The results were exciting. Students considered their props, backdrops, gestures and costumes with more care than I had ever seen previous students do.

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One group projected an image of the Washington Mall as the backdrop to one of their scenes; another group placed an image of a rally on a computer screen disguised as a TV to show how the press influenced many to become active in the movement. Based on feedback from their classmates, most of the presentations were successful in conveying the information they set out to share.

Since then, I have applied this

same process to other content and I continue to find it helpful in developing proficient listeners, speakers, viewers and, most importantly, learners.

Lauren Dickey is a 5th-grade teacher at Lowe Elementary in Jefferson County. She can be reached at lauren.dickey@jefferson.kyschools.us.

Free Audiobooks from SYNC

SYNC YA Literature into Your Earphones is back.

Thanks to your grand support of SYNC last year, *AudioFile Magazine* and the audiobook publishers have once again stepped forward to offer FREE Young Adult (YA) and classic/required reading audiobook downloads to your students, patrons and readers this summer.

This summer, a more stream-

lined Web experience will be launched at

www.AudiobookSync.com.

Start Spreading the Word

Tell your students, patrons and readers about the 20 free titles available for summer listening. We have created a complete toolkit of print and online promotion tools for you [here](#).

Lest They Forget

We know that telling *anyone* (let alone teenagers) now

about a program that launches on June 14 can lead to forgetfulness.

Ask your readers and listeners to take out their phones and to text syncya to 25827, and we will text them as each YA and classic pairing is released this summer.

Thanks for creating a summer of listening to literature, and please be in touch with any questions.



-Kirsten Cappy
SYNC Manager
AudioFile Magazine
sync@audiofilemagazine.com

Additional Summer Reading Resources

Activities to Share with Parents:

http://www.rif.org/documents/us/summer_reading.pdf
<http://www.readwritethink.org/bright-ideas/http://www.readwritethink.org/files/callouts/P-AS%20flyer.pdf>

Lexile Overview Video (6 minutes): <https://www.lexile.com/about-lexile/lexile-video/>

Research:

<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer/research.pdf>

http://www.reading.org/Libraries/Inspire/RT_60_8_9-Mraz.pdf

a-30223.html

<http://www.thinkfinity.org/bright-ideas-for-summer>

Activities for Students:

<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/printouts/reading-record-chart->

-Contributed by Kathy Mansfield, Library Medial Textbooks Consultant
kathy.mansfield@education.ky.gov

Poetry Minutes

Take a look and

listen to Poetry Minutes --

ekphrastic poems by kids

from western Kentucky inspired

by Journey Stories WKMS-FM

The link is www.wkms.org. Click on Poetry Minutes.

In honor of National Poetry Month, the kids of western Kentucky participated in a series of free poetry work-

shops presented by me through the Teacher Quality Institute at Murray State University. Kids in grades 3-8 wrote short poems that are broadcast each week day in April on WKMS-FM, the National Public Radio affiliate in Murray. The poems were recorded by elementary, middle and high school readers and are examples of ekphrastic poetry -- poems inspired by works of art. The kids' creations reflect the structure of poems by William Carlos Williams (*The Red Wheelbarrow* and *The Great Figure*). The WKMS website features the images that inspired the poems, which were part of the Smithsonian's Journey Stories exhibition, a portrayal of American history through the many differ-

ent kinds of journeys that comprise our past. The WKMS website also features a write-up about the project and links you can click on to hear the day's poems.

-Constance Alexander
Faculty Scholar - Teacher Quality Institute
Murray State University
Alexander Hall Rm. 338
Murray, KY 42071
(270) 809-2686
www.constancealexander.com

Reach Constance via e-mail at Caalexander9@murraystate.edu.



Summer Reading

for the Twitter account.

If teachers and/or parents are worried about how to capture this information and find out if students are really reading, then teachers can create a team blog, wiki or a VoiceThread for kids that they can access from a home computer, iPad, phone or the local library. Students and their teacher could be asked to create at least 2-3 responses on something that they have read during the course of the summer. It could be on the same book or on several articles. They would also be asked to respond to at least 2-3 other classmates' postings. To ensure that all students have access to these books and non-print sources, teachers and schools could partner with the community libraries, boys and girls clubs and/or community centers. Sending the school reading lists to these institutions gives students another avenue in which to participate. In this manner, the teacher and students are not only part of a reading and writing community, but they have shared books, articles and ideas beyond their classroom, neighborhoods, ethnic, gender and socio-economic backgrounds.

Choice, access, print and non-print reading materials, technology, and opportunities for dialogue may make this the best summer that some students have ever experienced. Take an opportunity to "think outside the box."



Suggested Resources

Booklists:

<http://www.reading.org/Resources/Booklists.aspx>

Created by teams of students, these booklists are released each year so they include up-to-date literature chosen by children. There are separate lists for children and teens.

http://childrensbooks.about.com/od/toppicks/a/books_boys.htm
Librarian Recommended Reading Lists for Boys

www.teenreads.com

A site dedicated to book lovers, providing a forum to discover and share commentary about the books and authors they enjoy.

www.kidsreads.com

For kids and parents, features a vast book database, contests, articles, author news and links, and many lists, including of newly published books.

<http://info.infosoup.org/lists/AllOneWorld.asp>

All One World: Multicultural Fiction for Teens

Some great fiction has been written about teens from a different culture that has to deal with problems because of their ethnic background.

www.goodreads.com/list/show/3721

32 books based on 18 votes: *The Rice Bag Hammock* by Shaeza Haniff, *The Five Chinese Brothers* by Claire Huchet Bishop, *Suki's Kimono* by Chieri Uegaki and more.

Informational reading websites:

http://www.humanesociety.org/news/magazines/kind_news/

At Kind News Online, kids get a

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glimpse of what it's like to read the daily news; however the content is geared more toward topics that most kids like, rather than topics that you'd find in "adult" news or social current events.



<http://tweentribune.com/>

Unlike Kind News, the *Tween Tribune* is geared more toward pre-teens that do have a greater interest in the "adult" world around them.

www.timeforkids.com

At the *Time for Kids* website, kids will find the same level of current news reporting, but with a slant toward what kids are most interested in. With more news stories than most other sites, *Time for Kids* is the place for students who are truly interested in keeping up with current events.

<http://www.sciencenewsforkids.org/>

Stories here really cover a wide range that science teachers will appreciate, including animals, space, the human body and much more.

<http://www.sikids.com/>

Sports Illustrated for Kids is especially useful for children who are really into sports. In addition to the news section, kids will find cool photos, videos and even a games section where they can pass time playing some pretty cool games.

<http://teenink.com/>

Teen Ink, a national teen magazine, book series and website devoted entirely to teenage writing, art, photos and forums. Students must be age 13-19 to participate.

MK Hardaway and Synthia Shelby are KDE literacy consultants. Contact MK at kay.hardaway@education.ky.gov and Synthia at synthia.shelby@education.ky.gov.

Using a Class Webpage: Warren County

At the beginning of the year, the Warren County school district implemented a new webpage program hosted by Digital School Network. As a new language arts teacher and with the Common Core State Standards implemented this year, I wanted to have access to all of my curriculum documents, lessons, and materials anytime. Additionally, I want to prepare my students to be 21st-century learners by giving them access to the real-world tools available on my webpage. As students become familiar with using my website to access their classroom resources, they are preparing for college classes, which are often online or utilize programs such as Blackboard or Moodle for viewing and uploading assignments. The website also has been a great tool for informing parents of upcoming field trips, due dates for permission slips, tests, school activities and other such pertinent information.

Each week as I completed my lesson plans, I would create a folder containing all documents, webpages, PowerPoint presentations and other resources used in the classroom. Folders are numbered by week, making it easy for parents and students to find all of the materials. This will be useful for me next year as well since I have all of my materials saved in chronological order in one place.

Despite having only one class set of textbooks, I wanted to give students the opportunity to have 24-hour access to our reading material. I found a website that has the textbook and posted this in the "Announcements" section of the webpage, as well as in other areas of the website to allow easy access for parents and students. The calendar feature on my website allows me to hyperlink documents so I can attach worksheets or other resources to a particular calendar date. If a student is absent

that week, he or she can go right to my website and download any work missed. If a student leaves a worksheet or book at school, he or she can simply go to my webpage, download and print if necessary. By keeping the site up to date, parents and students can have access to whatever I am doing in class at the touch of a button.

I include many other links on my website, including a site for reviewing weekly vocabulary, sites to help with homework and a link to Scholastic for ordering books. This link gives parents the opportunity to browse for books for their children on their own time, while I earn Scholastic points to use to purchase books for my classroom library. I have also posted movie trailers to the webpage to promote books like *The Hunger Games*.

Of course, websites are only beneficial if they are utilized.

Next year, to promote the website and help familiarize students and parents with navigation, I would like to start the year with an online scavenger hunt. Some of the features aren't used as much as I would like, and I want to engage students and families more. So far, parents and students seem glad to have easy access to class materials when a student is absent. I will build on these successes next year and hopefully expand on this positive experience.

Please visit my webpage [here](#).

Dee Dee Webb is an 8th-grade language arts teacher at Warren East Middle School. You can reach her via e-mail [here](#).



Classroom Spotlight: Barren County

cause I think it's fascinating that we all live such similar and yet such different lives, and I'd like to share this with my students.

A Final Thought

Think about what we have to learn from an exchange like the one between Robyn's students and Letitia's students. Letitia said it best: "our kids today have the world at their fingertips - as teachers, it is important to give the students the skills they need to not only survive but thrive in the digital world."

If you have exchanges happening, please share that with us.

We would like to highlight your story in another KDE publication. Send your story to renee.boss@education.ky.gov by June 15.

Robyn Cnockaert has been teaching since 1998. She first taught literature and composition at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, N.C. She came to North Carolina from Scotland. She then met and married a man from France, where she now lives and works teaching literature and language in an international high school. She's worked for the Lycée International des Pontonniers for two years, but only recently qualified as a French teacher. She was

required to earn a second master's degree and complete a year of teacher training to become certified to teach in France. In addition to Letitia, Robyn collaborates with teachers and students in North Carolina and North Dakota.

Letitia Hughes has been teaching for 18 years, with the last 14 years at Barren County High. In addition to serving as the school's literacy curriculum specialist, she

(continued from page 2)



Letitia's students enjoy posters from their pen pals. Photo taken by Letitia Hughes.

teaches AP Language and Composition to juniors and is involved in online exchanges with teachers from around the globe.



Help

Your contributions of ideas and lessons that work are welcome. E-mail

kay.hardaway@education.ky.gov

to submit. Your submissions may be included in the *Literacy Link* to help connect teachers across the state by sharing ideas, insights and best practices.

Access this and past
Literacy Links on KDE's
website:
[Click Here](#)



If you have questions or concerns, we want to help. Contact:

- Renee Boss- Academic Core Branch Manager - renee.boss@education.ky.gov
- Cindy Parker - Literacy Coordinator - cindy.parker@education.ky.gov
- Kathy Mansfield- Library Consultant - kathy.mansfield@education.ky.gov
- MK Hardaway- Literacy Consultant - kay.hardaway@education.ky.gov
- Jackie Rogers- Literacy Consultant - jackie.rogers@education.ky.gov
- Synthia Shelby- Literacy Consultant - synthia.shelby@education.ky.gov



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- ♦ KDE- [@KyDeptofEd](#)

Feedback from the Field

We love to hear from you. Your feedback helps us to tailor the *Link* to best meet the needs of teachers. Tell us how you're using it. Tell us how you'd like to use it. Tell us what you want to see more or less of - whatever you have to say, just send it my way.

"The KY Literacy Link is a wonderful publication. Thanks for all the work you and your team have done to create such a comprehensive document. And thanks for including family literacy."

- Annie R.



Additional Reading and Other Resources

- The NCTE Teacher of the year [talks](#) about integration of literacy strands, literacy as responsibility of all, argument vs. persuasion, productive struggle, intellectual risk-taking, teacher as learner with students, not needing pre-packaged curriculum and more.
- In this testing season, the business community urges educators and legislators to stay the course on the Common Core State Standards. Watch the [video](#) here.
- The Kentucky Writing Project 2012 Summer Academies focus on English learners and culturally/linguistically diverse students, as well as meeting the new Common Core Standards for literacy. Click [here](#) for more information.

